

Appl. No. 10/616,543
Amdt. dated December 9, 2005
Reply to Office action of August 9, 2005

Remarks/Arguments

Previous claims 1, 3-5, and 7-16 stand rejected as unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Montgomery, Sr. in view of Betz. Claims 6, and 17-19 stand rejected as unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Montgomery, Sr. in view of Betz, further in view of Koski. Claims 1 and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Lindholm or Brewer. Claims 13 and 15 stand rejected as unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Lindholm or Betz.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and for the following reasons.

All independent claims have been amended to include the requirement that the mats have beveled edges including a plurality of aligned and spaced holes useable as guides for the installation of anchors used to hold said mat to a walkway surface. Independent claim 13 further includes the limitation that the top surface includes raised strips between said horizontal rows and vertical columns to increase overall slip resistance. Neither of the cited references alone or in combination teach or suggest these limitations.

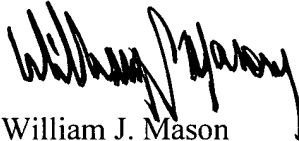
In fact, such limitations would not be of value in the cited references. Montgomery is specifically directed to rigid tiles that would not require that the edges are secured as in the case of the flexible mats of the present invention. Further, Montgomery teaches attachment of the tiles through anchors extending through the raised domes. In Betz, the fasteners are held within slots extending across the bottom surface of the covering. Lindholm and Brewer use suction cups since their devices are "attached" to the floor of a bath tub. Koski does not teach any

anchoring means.

These references also fail to teach or suggest the second limitation added to claim 13, namely that there are raised strips between the horizontal rows and vertical columns of truncated domes. In fact, Montgomery is the only reference describing a device with raised domes and Montgomery makes no suggestion of raised strips. The other cited references include no teaching that would suggest the addition of raised strips to the Montgomery device.

For the forgoing reasons, and in view of the amendments to the claims, it is believed that this application now defines a patentably distinguishable invention and is accordingly in condition for allowance. Such action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William J. Mason', is written over the typed name.

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